THE SOUTHERN ASSOCIATION QUARTERLY

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THE SOUTHERN ASSOCIATION QUARTERLY

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Volume I August, 1937 Number 3

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Reference to the minutes of the Forty-first Annual Meeting of the Southern Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools held in Richmond, Virginia, December 3, 4, 1936, as recorded on page 24 of this volume shows the following official action authorizing this publication.

> Upon recommendation of the Executive Committee the Association voted to adopt the report of the Committee on Publications appointed at the last annual meeting.
>
> The Committee on Publications of the Southern Association unanimously submits the following recommendations:
>
> 1. That a Southern Association Quarterly be issued.
>
> 2. That a board of five members be held responsible for securing an editor and supervising all matters pertaining to the publication and distribution of the Quarterly. This board is to be composed of the secretaries of the three commissions, the president, and the secretary-treasurer of the Association.
>
> 3, 4. (These sections recommend as to the character of the four issues and make appropriation for publication. See page cited above.)

In accordance with these resolutions the Board of Publication as listed above was set up, the editor elected, and the editorial committee constituted to consist of the President and the Secretary of the Association acting with the editor.

THE SOUTHERN ASSOCIATION QUARTERLY

Volume I August, 1937 Number 3

EDITORIAL NOTE

This issue of the QUARTERLY is devoted primarily to the work of the Commission on Curricular Problems and Research. The first two articles, those of Dean Hoke and Director Campbell, summarize the history and present plans of the Commission; the next three dealing with "significant trends in teaching" are addresses delivered under the auspices of the Commission at the Richmond meeting of the Southern Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools; the sixth article gives a curriculum experiment in a member college intended to suggest the relative values of generalized courses for beginning students as compared with the same courses for more advanced students; the seventh article is a criticism by a distinguished English scholar now teaching in America of the rapidly growing "honors courses" in our colleges; and the final article explains an interesting attempt to interpret to member institutions the qualitative standards now being developed in the North Central Association.

The History of the Commission on Curricular Problems and Research

By K. J. Hoke
Dean of the College of William and Mary

The Commission on Curricular Problems and Research grew out of the need to study intensively some of the educational problems which the Southern Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools has been meeting in its work of accrediting Southern educational institutions. Some of the more significant of these problems include: more emphasis on quality in standardization, relationship between school and college, cost of instruction in secondary schools and colleges, financial support of secondary schools and colleges, and the education of teachers in secondary schools and colleges.

The Southern Association has been studying these problems through committees appointed from its membership. Due to the fact that the membership of such committees is made up of people, who—on account of their regular positions—can give only partial time to the study of the problems before them, and also on account of the fact that only limited funds are available to support such studies, a sentiment has grown in the membership of the Association for the establishment of an organization which would have the sole responsibility for studying the problems of the Association. This responsibility is different from the executive responsibility of the two commissions which formerly carried on the work of the Association; namely, the Commission on Higher Institutions, and the Commission on Secondary Schools.

Accordingly, the Association at its annual meeting in December, 1935, created through its new constitution the Commission on Curricular Problems and Research. The duties of this Commission are to study accrediting policies of the Association, to study notable procedures in administering programs of studies, and to stimulate experimentation. The membership of the Commission is made up of thirty persons consisting of one person connected with a member institution of higher education from each state, one person connected with a member secondary school from each state, and eight people elected at large from member institutions.

The Association at its annual meeting in December, 1935, appointed the membership of the Committee, created means for its organization, and appropriated $1,000 for its expenses for the session of 1936. The first meeting of the Commission was held in Atlanta, February 15, 1936, at which time a chairman, a secretary-treasurer, and an executive committee of seven were appointed. At this meeting a survey of proposals for study from the membership of the Commission was made. As a result of the deliberation of the Commission at this time, it was decided to undertake "a coöperative

study between high schools and colleges" designed to develop an educational program that would more adequately meet the needs of our adolescent youth. In order to finance this study it was proposed that financial assistance be secured from the Association and from other sources.

The Association at its annual meeting in December, 1936, approved the recommendations of the Commission to undertake this proposed study and appropriated $1,000 for the expenses of the Commission for 1937, and in addition appropriated $1,500 a year for three years on condition that the Commission secure $2,500 a year for the same three years from some other source.

With this encouragement the Commission through its Executive Committee and with the aid of the state committees of the Commission on Secondary Schools has invited three schools in each state to participate in this study. Each state committee either has sent to the commission applications from schools which wish to participate in the study or has notified the Commission that such applications will be filed. Each state committee has also designated one of its members to act in a supervisory capacity of the work in these schools. In most instances this person is the state supervisor of high schools.

Acting on the authority granted it by the Association in December, 1936, the Executive Committee has given its attention to the securing of the necessary funds to finance this study. A grant of $10,000 has been secured for an exploratory study of one year in order that there may be adequate time for the schools to be thorough in the planning of their programs and also for the Commission to evaluate critically these plans before final selection of schools is made. All persons participating in the planning of this study are of the opinion that this exploratory year will contribute greatly to the success of the undertaking.

The Commission has been fortunate in securing the services of Dr. Frank C. Jenkins to act as a coördinator in this exploratory work. He will begin his work about July 16. By the last of September, the Committee expects details of the plan of procedure to be perfected. Early in October, Dr. Jenkins expects to begin his visitation of the schools desiring to participate in the study. Through this visitation, the Commission hopes to help the schools and also to secure information which will be helpful in choosing the schools to participate in the study. *This exploratory program provides also for conferences in each state to which the teachers, principals, and supervisors who are directly engaged in the undertaking will be invited. Through such visitation and conferences the Commission hopes to help the schools in the formulation of their own programs and also to secure information which will be helpful in selecting and directing the schools which participate in the undertaking.*

Concepts Underlying the Coöperative Study

By Doak S. Campbell
Director, Division of Surveys and Field Studies, Peabody College

Underlying the coöperative study of secondary schools and colleges of the Southern Association are certain fundamental concepts. It is the purpose of this article to point out two general considerations that seem to have been of most significance to members of the Commission and others who have participated in the developing of plans for the undertaking. It is not our purpose to present an extended discussion nor to attempt to present a comprehensive statement of philosophy.

In the first place, it is assumed *that the secondary school is obligated to provide educational experiences appropriate to the needs of young people of secondary school age.* No one seems to know just how nearly adequate the present programs in secondary schools are to meet this condition. There is widespread belief, however, that they are inadequate in a number of respects. It is evident, however, that many developments in comparatively recent times have added to the complexity of the problem. The demands upon the school by increasingly large numbers of young people have made it impossible for the selective factor to predominate. Society can no longer provide useful remunerative work for its young people. Industry cannot absorb them until they have passed the usual age for high school graduation. The schools cannot escape the obligation to provide for them. The schools cannot maintain the position that their present curriculum is adequate and that students who cannot or will not demonstrate achievement according to present standards should be denied the privileges of further work in a secondary school.

Furthermore, even though the basic curriculum in the schools has many excellent and effective qualities, there are many evidences that the objectives are not being realized with signal success. Important as preparation for further education in higher institutions may be, we face the fact that a large majority of youth will not pursue formal education beyond the secondary school. For such young people it is doubtful that a school program planned primarily for preparation for later formal study will be adequate. Moreover, there are many evidences that the present high school curriculum is ineffective even as preparation for successful college work.

A second general consideration is *that an adequate curriculum for meeting the various needs of high school youth can be developed through a planned program of experimentation and demonstration.* To be effective, such experimentation should be conducted along a wide front and should include a variety of situations. In this way the results will tend to be in accord with conditions that are typical in many high schools, and thus will not seem too visionary

or impracticable. The experiment must be characterized by a considerable amount of freedom on the part of those who participate. Proposed experiments are to originate in the schools themselves. Freedom to carry forward plans will be granted. Only such supervision and guidance will be provided as will give general direction to the enterprise and will make the results usable. In no sense is a pre-conceived type of curriculum to be imposed upon the schools for trial. It is assumed that if the work of the schools is to be improved, the schools must themselves be conscious of the needs to be met and must themselves set about the process of improvement. In the coöperative effort the schools can be given encouragement in an effective manner.

Although many other considerations of a fundamental nature have influenced the development of the program, those here stated seem to have a more direct bearing than any others.

Significant Trends in High School Teaching*

By Roscoe E. Parker
Professor of English, the University of Tennessee

It is undoubtedly a hazardous undertaking for one who is no longer a teacher in the secondary schools to attempt a discussion of the significant trends in high school teaching. In these days of experimentation and transition there would be some hazard even for a secondary teacher or an educational expert in such an undertaking. If, therefore, I do not present these trends in that technical language sometimes facetiously referred to as "pedagese," please remember that I am not an expert educationist. I am only a teacher.

A study of trends in teaching is not concerned with administrative organization or educational theory except as they influence classroom practice. These, as Matthew Arnold would observe, are important parts of the machinery of education; the teachers are the educational system. Administrative officers and school organization can provide the materials and the conditions for good teaching, but they cannot teach. Educational research and theory may develop new techniques and help us to free ourselves from the fetters of tradition, but they cannot educate boys and girls. Their education is the result of their own efforts, efforts which are most satisfactorily expended under the stimulation and direction of good teachers. The fundamental problems of education, therefore, are the teachers' problems.

From an intimate knowledge of what secondary school teachers are thinking and saying, from active participation in the work of local and national teachers' organizations, and from considerable observation of the classroom practices of high school teachers, I conclude that there are today four major trends in secondary school teaching. They may be briefly stated as follows: (1) the introduction into the classroom of an integrated series of learning activities intended to give students experiences analogous to those which they will have in later life; (2) the adaptation of classroom materials and activities to individual needs by means of differentiation; (3) the widespread use of some system of the unit assignment in the conduct of learning activities; (4) the recognition of the importance of creative activity in the educational process.

One of the most significant trends in current classroom practice is to be found in the tendency to substitute a series of integrated learning activities for the traditional quiz and lecture method. These activities are planned and directed for the purpose of giving students in school experiences analogous to but not necessarily identical with those they will have in later life.

* An address delivered before the Commission on Curricular Problems and Research, Richmond, Virginia, December 2, 1936.

This procedure is based upon the theory that all real education is, as President Lowell once said, self education, that educational development is the result of constant individual effort. The vitality of this philosophy of teaching lies in the fact that it is intimately related to pupils as individuals and to their personal and social needs, both present and future. It does not lose sight of the goal of education, which is intelligent living, in the presence of immediate details and objectives; but it insists that it is the business of teachers to plan and direct vital learning activities which will enable students to achieve intelligent outlooks upon life and harmonious patterns of experience.

The significance of this trend in teaching must be insisted upon the more because the principle upon which it is based was recently attacked by a distinguished university president. In *Harper's Monthly Magazine* for November, 1936 (No. 1038, pp. 602 ff.), President Hutchins of the University of Chicago wrote:

> We are beginning to behave as though the home, the church, the state, the newspaper, the radio, the movies, the neighborhood club, and the boy next door did not exist. All the experience that is daily and hourly acquired from these sources is overlooked, and we set out to supply imitations of it in educational institutions. The experience once provided by some of these agencies may be attenuated now; but it would be a bold man who would assert that the young person today lives a life less full of experience than the youth of yesterday. Today as yesterday we may leave experience to other institutions and influences and emphasize in education the contribution that it is supremely fitted to make, the intellectual training of the young. The life they lead when they are out of our hands will give them experience enough. We cannot try to give it to them and at the same time perform the task that is ours and ours alone. . . . In general education, therefore, we may wisely leave experience to life and set about our job of intellectual training.

This attack, it seems to me, is both inconsistent and ill-informed. It overlooks the fact that education is the practice of as well as the preparation for living. It also neglects both the traditional and psychological meaning of experience. J. F. Herbart stated the problem as follows a century ago: "Whenever a plan of instruction has to be made for any individual, there will always be found an existent circle of intercourse and experience in which that individual is placed. This circle is capable of being judiciously widened, or its contents may be more thoroughly examined; this is the first thing which requires attention." This statement has been accepted by modern teachers as a sound principle on which to base classroom practice. They accept the psychological definition of experience as the sum total of an individual's reaction to any given situation. These reactions are assured through carefully planned and directed learning activities whose aim is not "to supply imitations" of extra-school experience but to cultivate that "independent thought and study" which President Hutchins finds "now almost wholly missing from our program."

Finally, this teaching trend gives students that opportunity to do their work which President Hutchins fears teachers will always deny them. As this principle becomes operative in the classroom, the teacher becomes the director of the learning process, of the activities through which students gain valuable experiences. The teacher is not a guard whose duty it is to maintain order and decorum, nor is he a taskmaster primarily concerned with units of production. He is a coöperative, kindly, and intelligent assistant who performs his function by helping students to develop those attitudes and abilities necessary for fulfilling the professional and social responsibilities of the positions they are to occupy in life and for advancing in the art of effective living.

The second and third of the teaching trends I have listed as significant are discussed at length by Dr. Roy O. Billett in his excellent monograph on *Provisions for Individual Differences, Marking, and Promotion* (No. 13 of *Bulletin, 1932, No. 17*, U. S. Dept. of the Interior, Office of Education, Washington, D. C.). He states that the modern high school, with its ever increasingly heterogeneous student body, must "provide for greatly increased ranges of ability and for widely diverging interests, aims, and needs" of its pupils. He finds three major modifications in school planning to meet the new conditions. These are "homogeneous grouping, special classes, and plans characterized by the unit assignment." While these modifications cannot be accepted as panaceas, they are so vital in the formulation of teaching techniques that they deserve our consideration.

From the teacher's point of view, homogeneous grouping and the resulting special classes are merely different phases of the problem of differentiated instruction, of adapting teaching to the needs and abilities of students. This may be done more effectively through administrative planning and coöperation, but it is being done in countless classrooms through the efforts of teachers alone. Since the unit assignment is both a method of adaptation and of the application of a traditional principle of learning, it will be discussed separately as the third significant trend in teaching.

Homogeneous grouping is an attempt to adapt the educational program to the needs of the student. It is classification or sectioning of students according to ability, achievement, and aptitudes, and the adaptation of the learning process to the needs of the various groups. The classification is made in a variety of ways according to the facilities of various schools. Ability may be determined on such bases as mental rating, previous record, and state of health. Achievement is most frequently determined by diagnostic or placement tests. Aptitudes are more difficult to measure, but interest and desire are important factors. Whatever the bases of classification may be, it is important that students and teachers understand that the classification is made for the benefit of the student and that neither stigma nor special favor attaches to it. On the contrary, it is an attempt to group

students according to their individual tastes and abilities and to save them from embarrassment and a sense of failure which might result from miscellaneous grouping. It is differentiation which recognizes the fundamental principle of beginning with students where they are and building upon their previous experience.

Homogeneous grouping naturally results in the organization of special classes, which may be regular or supplementary. They may range from remedial instruction to creative expression. Normally, students are grouped on two or three levels. The result is what is sometimes known as the two-track or three-track program. The objection to the two-group system is that it generally makes provision only for the retarded and the normal. The more common three-group system is preferable in that it provides for the especially gifted pupils as well as for the normal and the retarded, and certainly they deserve consideration. Their classification with slow or even normal students frequently results in loss of interest and opportunity and in the formation of poor study habits. Even where homogeneous grouping is not possible, opportunity classes for those in need of remedial instruction and for those of superior ability should be provided. It is no solution of the problem to allow especially gifted students to find an outlet for their ability and energy in school activities from which others are excluded, for it is precisely in such activities that retarded pupils often find their most vital and stimulating experiences.

These special classes, whether regular or supplementary, demand differentiation in teaching techniques more than in materials and activities. The same types if not the same levels of experience may be enjoyed by all pupils, but the methods and mediums of approach and development must be adapted to the previous experience and achievement level of each individual or group of individuals. Teachers are recognizing this fact anew and are proceeding on the assumption that everything is not equally good for everybody everywhere at the same time. In spite of large classes, heavy teaching schedules, and the ever increasing burden of non-teaching details, there is a strong tendency for teachers everywhere to face frankly the necessity for differentiated instruction and to help students solve their individual problems. Somehow retarded students are given individual assistance in forming good study habits, frequent diagnostic tests and corrective drills, visual aids, and tutorial assistance. Somehow especially gifted groups, so long unprovided for because they need little drill and provide no serious administrative problem, are given much guidance in coöperative group enterprise, individual effort, and independent activity.

Surely this is the very heart of good teaching and should stimulate every student to achieve the best of which he is capable without depriving him of a sense of freedom and satisfaction in his accomplishment. It points toward the development through the classroom of that intangible thing called cul-

ture, which, according to Matthew Arnold, "indefatigably tries, not to make what each raw person may like, the rule by which he fashions himself; but to draw ever nearer to a sense of what is indeed beautiful, graceful, and becoming, and to get the raw person to like that."

The current trend toward differentiated and individualized instruction is evidence of a new attempt to adapt the modern school to the needs of a heterogeneous population. But the unit assignment, now so widely advocated and so variously described and practiced, is not new. What is new is the general acceptance of the immemorial practice of great teachers. The principle is inherent in the hoary jingle,

One thing at a time,
And that done well,
Is a very good rule,
As many can tell.

Modern applications of this principle have paraded as the project method, the contract plan, the Dalton plan, the Winnetka technique, and the laboratory method, each with its special emphasis and refinement of technique. And this principle of learning through units of experience is sound, regardless of the name partisans of particular applications of the principle may bestow upon it. It characterizes, according to Dr. Smith, the most common types of organization in English at the present; and Dr. Billett is of the opinion that "the terms 'unit' and 'unit assignment' are comprehensive and likely to suggest the essentially new developments under consideration better than other terms in current use." *An Experience Curriculum in English* uses the term "unit" to mean "an *organic whole* which is at the same time both a *structural and a functional* part of a larger organic whole."

Every subject is, of course, a unit of the curriculum or of learning. But each functions in many ways and must, therefore, be sub-divided into small units for instructional purposes. An instructional unit, then, may be defined as a series of unified activities through which pupils achieve a specific type of experience. Such units naturally vary in length. Some may be quite brief; others may require several days or even weeks. Regardless of its length, each unit is characterized by definiteness of purpose, unification of activities, relationship to vital needs, individual initiative, and modification of pupil abilities and attitudes. Only careful planning and effective guidance can secure these results. The introduction to the unit includes a statement of the objective to be achieved, of the procedures to be followed, and of the materials to be used. The pupils then proceed, individually or coöperatively, with the work to be done. This preliminary preparation is followed by presentation and discussion. Finally, there is an evaluation or testing for results of the unit. When necessary, reteaching and retesting are used for those who will profit thereby.

It will be observed that this method of teaching emphasizes pupil rather than teacher activity. It does not relieve the teacher of the necessity for careful preparation, planning, and direction; but it does provide for a degree of pupil participation and experience conspicuously absent in the traditional lecture or recitation method. Futhermore, it is in accord with the cultural pattern of American life, with what Ruth Suckow has called "the folk idea in American life." It makes of the classroom a miniature community with common problems and interests and ideals, while it maintains that regard for individual differences and abilities which characterizes a democratic society.

The growing recognition of the importance of creative activity in education justifies its consideration as our fourth significant trend in teaching. Yet, to speak of creative activity is almost to say shibboleth. Bergson's *Creative Evolution* (1907) was the prelude to *Creative Chemistry*, *Creative Criticism*, *Creative Expression*, and *Creative Youth*. The postlude is composed of special courses in creative dancing, creative drama, creative handicrafts, creative play, creative writing, and creative fads parading as progressive education. Teachers in some schools are so often told that they are teachers of students and not of subjects that there is danger of their forgetting the importance of content in determining the nature and purpose of classroom activities. It is obvious to every teacher that the pupil is the central and important element in educational activity; but learning activities are concerned with facts and materials and situations. These things play a vital part in the ordinary mental and social activities of life; they also function in all learning activities. Only those activities are truly creative which result in individual satisfaction and contribute to the development of abilities, attitudes, and skills. There is no virtue in activity for its own sake, nor can attitudes and abilities be created in a vacuum. They grow out of emotional and intellectual reactions to all sorts of stimuli impelling people to purposive action.

The effective teacher is aware of these facts and of the characteristics of the child so accurately set forth by Cardinal Newman in his discourse on *Liberal Education Viewed in Relation to Learning*. "For some years," he wrote, "his intellect is little more than an instrument for taking in facts, or a receptacle for storing them; he welcomes them as fast as they come to him; he lives on what is without; he has his eyes ever about him; he has a lively susceptibility of impressions; he imbibes information of every kind; and little does he make his own in a true sense of the word, living rather upon his neighbors all around him. He has his opinions, religious, political, and literary, and for a boy, is very positive in them and sure about them; but he gets them from his schoolfellows, or his masters, or his parents, as the case may be. Such as he is in his other relations, such also is he in his school exercises; his mind is observant, sharp, ready, retentive; he is almost

passive in the acquisition of knowledge. I say this in no disparagement of the idea of a clever boy. Geography, chronology, history, language, natural history, he heaps up the matter of these studies as treasures for a future day."

It is doubtful whether anyone has more clearly set forth the pupil-characteristics with which the teacher must concern himself than did Cardinal Newman. Yet he insisted that this gathering of knowledge is not true education but "the indispensable condition of expansion of mind, and the instrument of obtaining it." With this view modern educational philosophy is in agreement; in the light of its comprehension and interprepretation—and of many other factors—the teacher must develop his practice.

Much confusion arises among teachers from the lack of any general agreement concerning the nature and purpose of creative activity. What Francis Bacon observed at the beginning of the seventeenth century is still true, in practice if not in theory, in the twentieth. There is among teachers "the extreme affecting of two extremities: the one antiquity, the other novelty; antiquity envieth there should be new additions, and novelty cannot be content to add but it must deface." Recently, however, the principle of reconciliation and progress laid down by Bacon has been widely accepted: "Antiquity deserveth that reverence, that men should make a stand thereupon and discover what is the best way; but when the discovery is well taken, then to make progression." Progression has been made toward the conception of education as the aggregate result of experience. It is realized, however, that not all experiences are socially desirable in their consequences; therefore it is the function of education to provide, through the institutions established and maintained by society, a series of directed and significant experiences whose consequences will be individually satisfactory and socially desirable. These significant experiences come through activities which develop attitudes, abilities, and skills essential to "the perpetuation and re-creation of society." In planning activities for the achievement of these ideals of education the teacher may again find guidance in this statement of Bacon: "I cannot but be raised to this persuasion that this third period of time will far surpass that of the Grecian and Roman learning: only if men will know their own strength, and their own weakness both; and take, one from the other, light of invention, and not fire of contradiction; and esteem of the inquisition of truth as an enterprise, and not as of a quality or ornament; and employ wit and magnificence to things of worth and excellency, and not to things vulgar and of popular estimation."

These words of Bacon are consciously or unconsciously accepted by countless teachers in our secondary schools as the criteria of creative activity. These teachers are helping their students to apply invention to the inquisition of truth as an enterprise and to employ wit and magnificence to things of worth and excellency. The results are not always productive of new inventions or of high artistic originality; but the activities give understand-

ing of creative processes and offer opportunities for the exercise of the imagination, stimulation of the intelligence, and liberation of the spirit. Students who prepare their own local histories, construct parts of their laboratory equipment, design and make articles for their own use or enjoyment, work out their own manuals of instruction, write and produce their own plays, formulate and administer their own systems of government, or seek new experiences of other kinds are engaging in activities that are really creative.

These seem to be the most significant trends in high school teaching today. Others will and should emerge as teachers develop new techniques. The teacher, however, who becomes too much concerned with a particular methodology is in danger of losing his initiative and perspective. Likewise, the educational system or institution which sets too much store by administration and organization is endangering educational achievement. These are necessary and valuable to the extent that they create favorable teaching conditions. But there is no reason why administrative officers should control educational policies or receive higher remuneration than the best teachers. Education is achieved in the classroom. Methods of organization, curricula, and teaching techniques are the machinery of education. Machinery is valuable only as a means to an end. But there is a danger, as Matthew Arnold used to insist, in putting too much faith in machinery, even in the mechanics of teaching. The teacher who falls into this error becomes an artisan rather than an artist. An artisan is, as Webster's dictionary puts it, "one trained in some mechanic art; a handicraftsman." The prevalence of artisans in the classroom results in the continuance into the present of the situation recorded by Thomas Fuller in the seventeenth century. "There is scarce any profession," he wrote of teaching, "in the commonwealth more necessary, which is so slightly performed. The reasons whereof I conceive to be these: First, young scholars make this calling their refuge; yea, perchance before they have taken any degree in the university, commence schoolmaster in the country, as if nothing else were required to set up this profession, but only a rod and a ferula. Secondly, others, who are able, use it only as a passage to better preferment, to patch the needs in their present fortune till they can provide a new one, and betake themselves to some more gainful calling. Thirdly, they are disheartened from doing their best with the miserable reward which in some places they receive, being masters to their children and slaves to their parents. Fourthly, being grown rich they grow negligent, and scorn to touch the school but by the proxy of an usher." And he might have added: Fifthly, they put too much faith in panaceas and mechanical devices, without an intelligent regard for the major objectives of teaching.

The State of Virginia, which is reorganizing its entire educational program, recognizes the conditions and purposes with which this paper has dealt. I quote by way of summary: "One brief but accurate way of

expressing the purpose of the courses of study is to say that they are an effort *to improve instruction by securing a more widespread use of the methods of teaching which good teachers the world over have found most effective.*" Virginia concludes its *Interpretation of the Curriculum Revision Program* with these two significant paragraphs:

School experiences are only a relatively small part of the many influences which enter into the education of the child. The days in school may be barren stretches of compulsory guardianship during which the child reluctantly learns the rudiments of the three R's, or they may be days of associations and character-building experiences which greatly enrich all the later years of life. Much of the difference between these two extremes will be determined by the personalities of the teachers and not by a printed course of study.

The work of those who participated in the Virginian Curriculum Revision Program has effectively prepared the way for good teachers to bring much needed vitality into a too highly formalized school program. The kind of work contemplated in the revised curriculum undoubtedly demands a high order of teaching ability, a thoroughly trained and understanding principal, and the coöperation of thoughtful parents. Without superior teachers there is little hope of realizing the great benefits which the revised courses promise, and those parents and patrons who have glimpsed this promise must demand an adequately paid teaching staff for the Virginia public schools made up of men and women who represent in ideals and character the very best which our State can offer.

These demands the teacher who is merely an artisan cannot meet, but the teacher who is an artist can. An artist, to quote the dictionary again, is "one who professes and practices an art in which conception and execution are governed by imagination and taste, a person skilled in one of the fine arts." Imagination and taste are more important to the artist as teacher than mechanical methods and procedures; trained skill in the exercise of imagination and taste is more effective than the blind following of precept or example. Taste in the refinement of established techniques and imagination in discovering new methods are essential to the artist and to the teacher. Much has been said about creative activity and creative learning. Much needs to be done about creative teaching. Education is an art as well as a tool which functions in thinking and living. The teacher needs to keep his artistic vision in the activity of the classroom, for creative activity produces art when imagination and taste control the activity. The teacher as artist directs activities toward the mastery of the technical skills, personal abilities, and social attitudes which function in the art of living.

Such a teacher may be described by the definition of the creative or original artist written by Mr. Ralph M. Pearson: "The artist who extends his own experience in each new work, who is so alive to his environment and so sensitive to the myriads of fresh stimuli continually passing before his eyes that he automatically evolves new and functional concepts and new ways and means of expressing them." Perhaps this is a description of the teacher in his "ideal perfection," but we must remember that only the ideal is permanently practical.

Significant Undertakings in Secondary School Teaching*

By Miss Nell Lawler
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The work in integration of subject matter which is being done in the Junior High School of Canton, Mississippi, may be termed an experiment. Certainly it is an experiment if one understands by that term an attempt or trial. The work done so far cannot be compared with a perfected plan, for Canton's program is in the first stage of development. This account, which is simply a statement of what has been done in a year's time, shows weaknesses and imperfections that have developed because of lack of experience. Those faults are obvious to the group engaged in the work, but it was thought wise to recount the situation just as it occurred. If one judges the situation by comparing the year's work with work of former years, the estimate will be fairer. Then, too, if one remembers that functional organization of subject matter in high school presents many difficulties, the judgment will be not only fair but lenient. This brief explanation is given in order that no one will think that the group is satisfied with what it has done, but it is pleased, instead, that a start has been made towards curriculum improvement.

The purpose of the work is to make more meaningful and functional the subject matter taught in Canton. An attempt has been made to broaden the range of subject matter, to include socially significant materials, and to provide learning situations that hold a gripping interest for boys and girls and challenge their best efforts.

The integrated work in Canton Junior High School was carried on by three teachers, working in junior high school for five hour periods with one first-year class which consisted of forty-four pupils. These teachers planned their work coöperatively. Before any new work was begun the teachers met and discussed all phases in detail. The discussion was a free, informal one. Suggestions were offered and corrections made. When plans were perfected, the work was launched by the social studies teacher. The English and mathematics work followed the lead of the social studies. When needed the music teacher fitted her work into the plan.

This account proposes to give a somewhat detailed resume of the classroom work that was done in 1935-36. The work has been continued this year, but it seemed better to give an over-view of the work of a year, rather than an account of the two month's work of this fall. The work of last

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year was centered around two units, each lasting about four and a half months. The time element was not planned, for, though teacher guidance was exerted, student leads were considered. The units would have ended whenever the class was satisfied.

These two units of last year could be entitled "Ethiopia, Her Friends and Enemies" and "Water Transportation, and How It Has Affected and Does Affect Us." If in your mind you will let time march backward to the fall of 1935, you will remember the important position in world affairs held by Ethiopia. The class's interest in the situation had been fully aroused before opening of school. It would, at that time, have been almost impossible for the teachers to ignore the lead to a unit on this subject.

Unit One

I. *Aims.* There were four distinct phases of this Unit, one leading into the other so gradually that there was no break of continuity. These phases were the Ethiopian, the Italian, the English, and the French. Before the launching of this unit the teachers met and decided on certain general aims that would help to guide the work. These stated in general terms, were:

1. To learn some of the important geographical and historical factors which affect and have affected the lives of the people to be studied;
2. To obtain a knowledge and appreciation of the various countries, their contributions to music, art, and science;
3. To get an understanding and appreciation of the social and economic conditions in the countries studied;
4. To realize the uselessness of war;
5. To understand how selfishness among nations leads to disaster;
6. To arrive at a distinction between news and propaganda;
7. To attain the ability to use maps, to write and speak clear, correct sentences, to use the fundamental processes of arithmetic.

II. *Launching the Unit*:

1. The Ethiopian Phase. On Saturday prior to the opening of school on Monday teachers met their classes. On that day the teacher of social studies introduced the Ethiopian question by discussing newspaper, magazine, and newsreel items regarding it. The class was asked to bring on Monday articles and pictures which they could find relative to this subject. Numerous pictures were brought. Stimulated by these, the class was asked to list on the board the things they would like to know about Ethiopia. From these questions the work for something over two weeks was outlined. The librarian supplied the bibliography for the study, reference books were brought in, and current material was supplied. All of this work was carried on in the social studies class. For the first week the English and arithmetic teachers had drill work, reviewing the fundamentals of arithmetic and drilling on sentence writing and correcting a few common speech errors. The second week the oral themes in the English class were on such subjects as, "A Hunting Trip in Ethiopia." The class was very much pleased to talk in English class about what they had learned in history. Another day in drill on verb phrases, the sentences that the class composed illustrating these phrases were statements about Ethiopia. The sentences were better than the usual run of original sentences illustrating a grammatical rule.

2. The Italian Phase. There was no launching of the Italian phase of the question. It grew out of the class's demands to know about Ethiopia's enemy. The same procedure was followed, the social studies class deciding what it would like to know about Italy. The teacher guided the work and supplied the materials. Besides the reading and discussion, the class made peep boxes of Italian scenes, books on Italian life, and maps showing various geographic facts. In arithmetic the class problems were solved concerning distances between points in Italy and Ethiopia, England, and Suez Canal; problems in exchange of money and in comparison of population and size of the two armies. The music teacher made a contribution by guiding the pupils in developing an appreciation of the Italian contributions to music. In English class letters were written telling of an imaginary trip to Italy. One day the teacher told the class of her visit in Italy. Another, selections were read from *Macaroni Ballads*. These poems told of the Italian's love of his country. At the conclusion of the division on Italy, it was decided to have a work-day program and to invite a few friends and grade mothers to visit the class. The invitations were written in the English class. The subjects for the program were selected in the social studies class, prepared in the English class, and delivered in the social studies class.

   The class was intensely interested in the work. Day by day, the members of the class put thumb tacks in a large map of Ethiopia at the points where a battle had occurred. Articles were brought to their attention concerning both sides of the question in an effort to try to help them to see which was propaganda and which was news. That, however, was a tremendously difficult problem.

3. The English Phase. After the work-day program the teachers met to discuss when the unit should end. It was concluded that there were questions to which the class demanded answers, and that it must be continued until these were discussed. Consequently the English phase of the unit was launched by the class's insisting on knowing "Why has England sent so many ships to the Mediterannean?," "Why is England standing in the League against Italy?," and many more that grew out of their reading. The English phase developed into the largest section of the entire unit. First the social studies teacher taught the significant geographic facts concerning the island. Then beginning with a brief review of the early history of the period, the work in geography and history continued to modern England and then necessarily considered the English colonies. The work in the English class was of course easily integrated. When the social studies class studied the Angles, Jutes, and Saxons, the English class first read a simplified story of Beowulf, and then four prose stories of the Arthurian Legends. When the social studies class brought the history up to the Elizabethan period, the students read Raleigh's and Tennyson's account of "The Revenge," studied the Elizabethan theater, and read "A Midsummer Night's Dream." Then the Industrial Revolution was attacked in social studies, and letters in English class were written from apprentices to their home folks, from manor ladies to their friends, and from factory workers to the farm relations. "Sally in Our Alley" and "The Song of the Shirt" were read and discussed. The history of the Victorian period was the background for Dickens' "Wreck of the Golden Mary," and some of Tennyson's short poems. When the social studies class left England for India, the English class devoured stories from the Jungle Book. In every instance written themes were on subjects suggested by the social studies teacher and worked out in the English class.

The arithmetic class followed the work closely. Graphs showing comparisons of exports and imports were made. Problems based on distances and exchange of money were solved. It was found that arithmetic contributed much to the Unit.

One may ask, "But when were specific facts taught?" Well, when themes showed poor sentence structure, drill was given on writing complete sentences. In the social studies when the climatic conditions of India were discussed necessarily the monsoons were mentioned. This led to the study of the wind systems of the earth. During this special phase of the study, the arithmetic class was taught the meaning of latitude and longitude, and solved problems based on this subject.

When the English phase was completed, an over-view of it was given in the form of an original pageant entitled "Miss Britain Looks Back." The scene was laid in Father Time's court, where Miss Britain boasting of her present prowess is made to feel her obligation to the past by the arrival of representatives, beginning with a man of the stone age, who discuss the contributions of each period. In the conclusion of the pageant, by means of graphs Miss Britain's boastings concerning the power of England were substantiated. The pupils chose in the social studies class the part they wished to present in the pageant. Facts concerning the part each was to take were discussed in the social studies class. Then the presentation of the facts was prepared in the English and arithmetic classes.

4. The French Phase. The French section of the unit was an outgrowth of the class's finding that France was interested in the Ethiopian war, that in many instances the history of France was closely associated with England's, and that English colonial possessions were often involved with the French. This was a short division, carried on in the same manner as the other three. It proved to be a particularly interesting one for the music class. The pupils were interested in studying the music of the different historical periods. It was felt that the music section of the unit contributed a great deal in helping the class to feel the spirit of the people.

III. *Reaction:*

1. Teacher. The work seemed to all the teachers stimulating, vital, and interesting. From the instructor's point of view it was a pleasure to work even though it required much outside preparation. To those who still believe that knowledge of facts is necessary to education, it was satisfactory to realize that the class learned many more facts by this method of teaching than by the strict adherence to the textbook. These facts were not only learned, but because they were connected to a whole were remembered longer.

2. Pupil. The pupils showed unusual interest in the work. They wanted to talk about it when they met the teachers on the campus. They said such things as: "I was talking last night to my uncle about the war, and he said Italy's treatment of Ethiopia was just as if Mr. Champion took Mr. Shakleford's farm. Do you think it's the same?," or "What does it mean by 'putting on a sanction'?" Almost daily they brought pictures or articles they had cut out of periodicals.

The first few times that the arithmetic and English assignments were on social studies subjects, the class acted as though they thought it was a good joke. They would say, "You didn't know we were having something about this in our social studies, did you?," or with attitude of utter astonishment they say, "Are you really going to let us get our social studies themes in Eng-

lish?" Then they seemed to realize that there really was not a trick in it when they worked problems and wrote themes about things they cut out of the day's paper and discussed in the social studies.

An unexpected reaction came from an eleventh grade student in the American History class. She said to the teacher, "I wish we could take a week off and study Ethiopia. The seventh grade's doing it, and they know so much about it." Before the teacher could answer, another eleventh grader spoke up, "Well, you can't though, that's that new stuff they're teaching." And, so it was, but it was probably better than that aged in the book.

IV. *Evaluation.* The teachers used various methods to evaluate this unit. New type tests were given. Some of these required the knowledge of facts; others required opinions. Check lists were used to estimate work done by individuals. Paragraphs were written, and talks were made. In these the teachers tried to lead the pupils to express their views or opinions on various subjects. As much as possible teachers talked informally with the students hoping to gain some idea of the value of the work. Observation proved a means of evaluating.

Unit Two

I. *Aims.* During the work on the first Unit, the three teachers noted leads for the next unit of work. There were many, but after discussion, the teachers decided that more interest seemed to center about Water Transportation than about any other. These leads grew naturally out of the work concerned with the Ethiopian conflict and the French and English empires. As the leads were considered, the teachers began to plan to gather material for such a unit. After a canvass of the library, a bibliography of the materials was formed, and enough mimeographed copies for each member of the class were made. The teachers of the group then met, and the aims for the second unit were set up as follows:

1. To engender an understanding and an appreciation of the importance of water transportation in the lives of the people of Canton, Mississippi;
2. To engender an appreciation of the skill involved in modern water transportation;
3. To create an understanding of the inter-dependence of people upon other continents;
4. To aid the pupils in developing the ability to use books in locating materials, in finding answers to problems, and in interpreting maps;
5. To aid the pupils in developing the ability to draw accurate, valuable conclusions, or generalizations;
6. To promote the ability to use the working tools; namely, reading, writing, and computing;
7. To engender an understanding and an appreciation of the part water transportation has played in the development of the world, with special reference to the United States and Mississippi;
8. To engender an understanding and an appreciation of the part scientists and and inventors have played in the development of modern water transportation;
9. To aid in developing an understanding and an appreciation of man's ability to use his environment for the futherance of progress as is shown in the development of water transportation;
10. To promote the ability to work coöperatively;
11. To promote the ability to speak and write correct sentences;

12. To engender an understanding and an appreciation of the part the physical make-up of the earth has played in the progress of the world with special reference to water transportation;
13. To engender an understanding of the part weather, climate, tides, and ocean currents play and have played in water transportation;
14. To show through the study of literature how transportation has affected the lives of many generations.

As in the first unit, the social studies work was the core of the unit, the English and arithmetic teachers fitting their work around that subject. In discussing the work of the class, prior to the launching of this unit it was found that all the teachers felt the pupils needed the experience of compiling references and writing in their own words this information. It was then decided that in launching the unit on water transportation the social studies teacher should suggest to the class that they bring their work together in the form of a book. This project was adopted. The material for the book was gathered in the various classes, checked in the social studies class, and worked into the form for the book in the English class.

II. *Launching.* On the day before the launching of the unit, the social studies teacher put on display in the room pictures showing various methods of transportation. Several books on transportation were placed on the reading table. No reference to these was made by the teacher, but all questions asked by the pupils in regard to various books were answered. When the class met the next day, the pupils were directed into a discussion of modern transportation by noting a large picture of the *Normandie*, which was on display in the room. From this discussion grew the outline of the unit, the class deciding to begin the study of transportation with the earliest type and proceeding to modern types.

III. *The Social Studies Work.* At the outset the social studies class read for information and discussed the reasons for crossing streams and the methods first used. Following this came the study of ships of ancient history, as to their construction and use by the Chinese, Egyptians, Phoenicians, Carthaginians, Greeks, and Romans. In connection with this the class studied maps to learn where each of these groups lived and discussed how they lived. They read for information concerning the geographic influences which played a part in man's need and desire to travel by boats. Then followed a study of the ships of the Crusades, of Marco Polo's trip to the East, of the influence of the invention of the compass and printing upon trade and the improvements of ships was included. This part of the study also brought in the story of the Viking ships, the Spanish, Portuguese and English ships, and some of the famous explorers, such as Diaz and Columbus. This led to a division concerned with the exploration and colonization of America. At the conclusion of that division, ships of today and their use were studied. The final division of the unit was important water routes of trade. The method throughout the entire work was reading for information concerning the subject, discussion of the information, and compiling in written form for the book. These written sections were read and criticised in the social studies class by the pupils. The teacher then had a conference period with each child and after the material had been reworked in the English class, a committee composed of teachers and pupils chose the best ones for the book.

IV. *The English Work.* In the English class all written themes were on subjects assigned in the social studies class. When the class desired pamphlets from steamship companies, the letters were written in the English classes. The subjects of oral themes were based on material studied in the social studies. Some of these subjects were: How Ships Signal When Passing, A Description of the *Normandie*, a Boat Trip on Lake Michigan, How a Ship is Loaded With Bananas. The pupils felt

that they had a reason for writing and talking on these subjects. It was found that such subjects were more vital than the usual subjects in English themes. The literature was chosen to parallel the Water Transportation work. At the outset of the unit Masefield's "Sea Fever" and "Cargoes" were read. The first, of course, shows a sailor's love of the sea; the second gives a poetical history of shipping. Later when Norse ships were studied the class read "The Story of Balder" and "The Skeleton in Armor." During the section devoted to Spanish and English ships "The Admiral's Ghost" and "Drake's Drums" were studied in the English class. When the class began to read and discuss the exploration period, Miller's "Columbus" and "The Landing of the Pilgrims" found a place in the course. During the colonization study, the English class read stories and poems of the colonies, such as, "The Courtship of Miles Standish" and some of the tales from "Grandfather's Chair." In this section it was necessary to discuss the Indians and their relation to the colonists. The class then read "Philip of Pokanoket." The character sketch led to a discussion of biased historical accounts and how the writer's purpose colors his writings whether it be history or propaganda. The Puritan's attitude towards Philip upset the class to such an extent that the teacher wondered what she had done when she heard a pupil say, "Sounds like those Indians got treated like the Ethiopians." During the social studies study of modern ships and water routes, the English class read stories of sea adventure. Whenever it was possible, the English class talked, wrote, and read concerning the transportation unit, following as nearly as possible the social studies work.

There was no phase of the English work which could be termed extracurriculum. Once every two weeks the class was conducted by the pupils in the form of a literary club. For the club's programs, talks and papers and dramatization of the English and social studies work was presented. This, however, was a part of the unit as much as all other classes.

V. *The Arithmetic Class.* The arithmetic class interspersed the regular drill on the fundamentals of arithmetic with problems based on transportation. Some of these related to comparison of size and tonnage of ancient and modern ships and other related to speed and cost of shipping and transportation. When these problems were introduced, the class was eager to solve them and often suggested similar ones.

VI. *The Evaluation:*

1. Pupil's Reaction. In evaluating the subject matter learned in this unit, the teacher used the essay and objective type tests and check lists. The teachers noted that the class showed pleasure in its work, a satisfaction in its accomplishment, and an understanding of the study as a whole. The objectives of initiative and ability to work together were tested by such means as the arrangement and preparation of a club program or the criticisms that the pupils offered on the written accounts which were read in class. In estimating these observations the teachers compared the class's ability to handle such situation with other sections of the same grade. It was felt that these pupils showed more interest in their work, that they were more capable of independent thought and work, and that their general information was greater than other sections which followed the traditional methods of study.
2. Teacher's Reaction. The teachers themselves felt that through integration, each subject had been able to contribute more to the child's experience. The many conferences between the teachers helped them to see important and trivial matters in their real light. Both teachers and pupils had a feeling of satisfaction when they broke down barriers between subjects and welded them together as a whole.

Significant Undertakings in College Teaching*

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The invitation to read this paper suggested no limits other than that of scope implied in the subject for discussion, but I shall confine my remarks to what we are trying to do in the freshman and sophomore years at Hendrix College. Teaching of significance, I am sure, has appeared throughout the history of formal instruction. Whenever it has been skilfully directed towards desirable objectives, has been adapted to ascertained interests, needs, skills, and urges of students, has been favored by situations provocative of student effort, and has resulted in mental activity commensurate with the outlay of application and capacity, it has had enduring significance.

It is, I think, generally agreed that the peculiar distinctiveness of any instruction derives from the value of its objectives as conceived and sustained by both students and teacher, from the nature of the procedures followed and from the instructor's qualifications, and his understanding of the student quality with which he deals. However essential subject matter may be to the teaching process it does not determine the quality of the instruction. At any rate the factors as here stated received major consideration in the formation of the program which I shall try to present.

Throughout the last three decades, and particularly in the 1920's, many observant people became quite agitated by the recurring assertion that college education, especially those phases of it not related to either extra-curricular activities or the vocational interests or skills of students, was poorly done and for all effective activities of life a failure. Particularly vexing was this indictment when it came from the typically successful self-made American industrialist, or from those who had risen to prominence in the pre-depression banking fraternity or from the American success-story writers. The charge cut deeper still when it was implied in the high-pressure sales talk of educational promoters as they proclaimed an education that would increase one's earning capacity by appreciable degrees as he advanced through all the stages from grades to the bachelor's degree in due and ancient form. Then, as the products of our higher education passed through the World War, experienced a decade of astounding increase in educational mass-production mired deep in post-war sordidness, and witnessed the crash of an economic order fully approved by a vast majority of teachers and educational statesmen, people of all classes questioned the kind of education offered by the schools. And, as educated specialists, experts, and authorities joined the humbler folk, first in unem-

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ployment and then in the bread lines and soup kitchens, college authorities lashed into the criticism of what was passing as higher education in America. Why, men asked, had education failed to produce men and women capable of understanding and determining the social order in which not only livings are made but human welfare is conditioned? Other less reverent souls ask today why there need be an education that simply fits a man to serve the corporate-owned machine, join the unemployed, or find his place among the white-collared job holders whose compensation is but a respectable dole.

When educators began admitting the shortcomings of their work, they set about a rigid examination of what they were doing. From their studies came divergent views and much confusion of voices; but in the attempt to find new ways, the issues of education were somewhat clarified. Is it desirable and possible, men asked, for the colleges and universities to provide an education more nearly adequate to the needs of all the people who live in a democratic society such as we have in the United States of America? If so, what kind and degree of education will afford that adequacy, and how may it be provided?

Many of those who have studied the issues have reached the conclusion that for the perpetuation and improvement of the democratic way in this country there is urgent need for a different type of general education for all who are capable of its accomplishments. They hold that a fair measure of such education may be offered in all of our institutions without abatement of effort in advancing the frontiers of knowledge, in diffusing culture, in promoting erudition, or in preparing men and women for civic performance in trades, vocations and professions. The point on which there is greatest agreement is that, if such education is provided on the college level, it might best be offered in the freshman and sophomore years.

In providing the type of training towards which they groped, the major problems for educators were to determine its objectives, to lay out its patterns, to provide its content or factual substance, and to clothe it in habiliments acceptable to professional educationists and administrative officers. Efforts to solve these problems resulted in little agreement, and consequently the plans evolved for their solution are as different as are the institutions projecting them. Men do not agree on what general education is or should be, what its objectives should be, what controls are necessary for realizing it, or what procedures might best promote its ends. But there is substantial agreement that the aims of higher education might stand clarification, that a different kind of teaching is necessary to its accomplishment, and that in the initial stages especially success depends on instructors who for the most part have had no special training for such work. Consequently the new programs have appeared in as many forms as in institutions.

While infinite pains have been taken to refine views on the many aspects

of general education, little of value has been said about the teaching it requires. It may be that nobody knows much about this matter. The views of classroom teachers might help us if they were in any accord on the subject, but they are not. Probably they do agree as well on teaching for general education as they have ever agreed on the teaching for departmental subject-matter specialization; and to me that is encouraging. For teachers whose sole educational aim is the transmission of the cultural heritage current instruction for general education has little, if any, significance. One who thinks college education should be devoted to the preservation of the democratic way of life, the democratic dream, the American assumption, or any other grouping of ideas abstracted from the stern realities of social life, can find little merit in the teaching of today in the field of general education. Those who think major emphasis in college instruction should be given to the propagation of Utopian ideas or the stirring of students to move immediately and directly to the reconstruction of the economic, social, and political order, and after the prescriptions of reform enthusiasts can find little value in an education for living as well as for doing things.

If one holds that students may acquire, and that most college students are acquiring to their capacity, a satisfactory general education and reasonable pre-vocational and pre-professional training, as well as being trained to care for their own human needs, in the courses of specialized and departmentalized concentration study usually offered in the first two years of college, he can have little patience with this newer teaching. Many college professors still hold this view, despite the fact that such courses are framed and taught by highly refined specialists, whose objectives, procedures, and subject matter have been formulated for a generation who had awaiting their graduation from college a fair prospect of a reasonably satisfying place in a stable business and professional world. Apparently oblivious of what has happened to this world and to the human spirit since the 1890's and early 1900's some subject matter specialists still seem to think all college instruction, especially that of the liberal pretension, should be tailored as an adornment for the few who are so situated that they can spend from one to four years trying to become specialists in subject matter fields. They take little account of that vast army of young men and women, who after that period of elementary concentration, never reach any appreciable level of specialist competence, or never undertake the work of a specialist, or work in a field different from that in which they specialized in college. Moreover it seems that the high-powered specialists-producing educators seldom reflect on the amazingly low order of competence in the rank and file of our specialist practitioners.

These various slants on college education in the first two years are rejected by those who believe that every aspect of college education will probably change, perhaps rapidly, as a consequence of the impact which

the discovery and imparting of new truth will make as the scientific method and spirit influence the teaching of youth for a changing democracy, or for another form of social control. If we are heading back to the pre-war intellectual and academic order, there is little excuse for changing our college curricula and teaching. But, if we are not headed for a reaction and recognize the need for a general education different from what has paraded the academic world under that title, there is need for concentrated attention on some of the issues involved.

As already stated, there is facing us today the question whether our institutions of higher learning without abating their zeal for advancing the frontiers of knowledge, without yielding their devotion to pure learning, offer an adequate general education? Can this be done, and at the same time provide better opportunities for specialization for those who have just claims to it? And if attempted at all, should its aim not be to offer men and women in at least the freshman and sophomore years what they shall most probably need in order to realize over a full span of life, a mental efficiency, a culture, a character, and a working competence essential to a satisfactory life in a profoundly and erratically changing scene in both men and things? If these issues are answered in the affirmative, the question arises, how may our institutions best do the job?

In most of the college plans for meeting these issues student needs form the center of interest. If realistic in conception and execution the teaching involved is student-centered, takes its departures from his contemporary world, and directs its efforts at the student's understanding of things as he passes through college, spends his mature years in trying to achieve in life as it comes, and then views in retrospect his own accomplishment in the total of human endeavor. Teaching required for ends of this kind centers about these assumptions: that education is a personal matter and very human; that its aim is or should be to develop student capacity to understand and appreciate as well as to do things; that each student must of necessity have his own intellectual pattern; and that his educational possessions should enable him to understand and to do with a maximum of satisfaction to himself as a member of society. Such education and such teaching is defended on the claim that a season of this kind of exposure is desirable for the discovery and testing of capacities on the part of immature people before they are launched into some unknown and difficult field of specialization. Moreover, it assumes that training of this kind will best prepare one for constructive participation in the social order in which he lives.

As I see it, the immediate objective of these newer programs is the bringing about of student-experience in mental change and development resultant from mental activity directed in a free examination and criticism of the society where he is building, "within the general welfare as a frame

of reference," an intellectual structure that will best engage a life concern towards making a happy and effective being, wisely integrated within himself and with those externals we have in mind when we speak of the social order. And, until it is proved we are wrong, we assume that this training does to and for a student what will best qualify him for making his contribution to the enrichment and transmission of the cultural heritage, to the elevation of personal living, and to the improvement of the human understanding.

This is only asking that education provide for the student an intriguing opportunity to acquire a penetrating and meaningful acquaintance with himself and with his situation, such as will support him as he meets the conditions of cultural growth in his own life and endeavors to achieve in the realities about him.

When, if ever, this approach to education succeeds, it will offer all college students that which most graduates of recent years utterly lacked on attainment of the bachelor's degree, what an impressive majority of us lacked on completion of formal course instruction in our respective professional and graduate fields, what most of us have literally picked up, if acquired at all, over a long stretch of years, from unreliable sources and without competent guidance. It has about reached the point in this country that everyone, college trained or not, has to educate himself for all effective understanding and intelligent living outside the narrow routines, techniques and facts required in his own vocational or professional specialty. That may be sufficient for many people, but from men recently out of college with nothing to do and nowhere to go, from successful specialists who have found themselves unprepared for intelligent participation in public affairs, and especially from those who have met the full measure of academic specialization only to find no place for action in American life, there comes a harsh indictment of the general education available in their undergraduate days.

Attempts to improve undergraduate instruction have brought many changes in curricula. In most cases these changes have been made by realists in education. Some of them have been enthusiastic but not emotional. Not one leader amongst them is a Utopian. Not one has sought or offered a panacea for all of our educational maladies. They simply do not conceive college training as solely to rationalize, preserve, and transmit things and ideas as handed down by the fathers. They do not agree that every departure from the beaten paths of academic practice is made at the sacrifice of scholarship and culture in a futile attempt to entertain the masses of God's unwashed, who range from mediocre downward in ability for academic achievement. On the contrary they believe the new general education will advance the cause of genuine learning. The scientific method and spirit are as basic in the new programs as in the old, in the new teaching as in the older. They believe they are making better provision for con-

centration towards pure scholarship and even towards utilitarian ends than obtained under the old systems. That is quite an important aim and a pronounced result of the Hendrix plan, as we judge it.

The important question to my mind is not whether the trend of thinking is in the direction here indicated, but rather isn't the trend dangerously strong? Scholars, educational statesmen, and laymen are turning in that direction. As we rise from the lower depths of the depression and men of all classes are again employed, a reaction may come; but just now the educational thought of this country, outside of limited groups of specialists, is concerned especially with what men shall know and be able and willing to do about the world in which we live.

What I have said thus far is offered that you may understand what is behind the plan of education in which I think there is teaching of marked value. I realize that it concerns but one plan, and that in a small college. I am aware also that many relevant matters have not been touched and that others have been inadequately presented.

If our plans for the work of the junior and senior years were before you, you might better determine what significance there is in the general college features of the program. As you will see, we planned as much for the improvement of concentration-study as for emphasis on education of a more general character. No one claims that in this set-up we have attained. What has been done is not considered as final in any sense. We set out to experiment and were and are prepared for many a disillusionment. Every aspect of our work is under as critical examination as we are able to make. What we do is tentative. We propose to do more, or less, or none of it, as experience suggests. The present stage was reached after more than three years of study and planning and two and a half years of actual trial.

We began our investigations by probing into the indictments hurled at the undergraduate work in American colleges and universities. These investigations led to a study of the emerging innovations for improvement. Through sub-committees of our faculty every aspect of the problems involved in our own situation was studied at length. The reports from these studies were discussed in stated faculty meetings, and together were referred for further study to a committee of the chairmen of the smaller committees. As reports or findings came from this committee they were discussed at wearisome length by the faculty as a whole.

Then, as we were in a situation where we required more light for safe progress, a member of the faculty was relieved of residence duties and ordered to spend as much time as the faculty advised in studying what other institutions were doing, why and how they were doing it, and what key faculty men and representative students thought about it all. This was in January 1934. By that date there were in operation many interesting plans, programs, or systems, and all in good institutions, for the kind of

educational opportunity we were chasing. Since that time they have increased in numbers and varied in form, until they are found in representative institutions in all sections of the country. Some of them are actually colorful. Few are in 1936 what they were when first projected. Very little is said of their comparative merits. No institution seems to have claims to the best plan.

The plan now in operation at Hendrix is a tentative working arrangement. There is little original in it. There is something distinctive in it. Its value, it seems, might be studied in the light of its objectives, procedures, and results. The value of outcomes, we think, is determined by the quality of teaching done. Our instruction is done in a plan somewhat as follows. The work of the first two years is that of the general college, in which the offerings are divided into divisional and departmental courses. The divisional courses are grouped rather arbitrarily into three divisions; viz., the Natural Science Division with three courses, the Humanities Division with seven courses, and the Social Science Division with nine courses. Classes meet three times a week through the semester, and most of the courses are offered each semester. Each student in the general college is required to take three courses in each division. He may take as many as he likes.

The teaching staff in each division largely determines its own program. However, there is fair agreement amongst those who teach divisional work as to objectives of their respective divisions as well as of the general college as a whole. There is complete agreement in trying to approach subject matter in non-technical language and from the layman's standpoint. The teachers try to keep in mind that all students are laymen and most of them are doomed to remain in that class. They undertake to lead the student to acquaint himself with the subject matter, methods, and spirit appropriate to an understanding of the fields of specific and related knowledge bearing on the objectives of general education. They try to forget subject matter categories, and carry their inquiries across departmental barriers at will. I have not heard of one hesitating to make his class aware of the fact when he leaves the area of his special interests and invades the twilight zones between subject matter fields where specialists have usually feared to tread. The quality and relevancy, rather than the departmental identity, of factual materials determine the content substance offered. It may, and often does, happen that teachers and students use in these courses the identical matter used in departmental courses of the old or new type. They are free to seek at will the subject matter best suited to their ends. Facts are as important here as in the departmental work. Here they merely exercise greater liberties with what go as facts.

The individual teacher works on the assumption that students differ as regards interests, needs, capacities and urges. He assumes that advisers in some measure have ascertained these differences before admitting students

to his courses. Preliminary to classification freshmen on entrance and sophomores at the end of that year are given a number of tests to reveal "both the quantity and quality of their educational possessions, the areas of greatest and least achievement, and how they stand with reference to their fellow students." The adviser has before him the data revealed in these tests, together with those gathered from the students' home, social, and civic life.

I will attempt to describe in mere outline the work of the Social Science Division. It now offers courses as follows: Contemporary America, Modern Governmental Problems, Current Economic Problems, Social Problems and Institutions, European Civilization 1760 to 1914, Contemporary Europe, Modern World Geography, Introduction to Philosophy, Religion in Human Culture. Each course is intended to make a distinct contribution to the student's comprehension and use of the knowledge pertinent to an understanding of the area covered by the division in which it is offered. From the standpoint and with the outlook of the layman the instructor guides the student in stating and analyzing problems or situations; in collecting, evaluating, and synthesizing data; and in examining laws or principles for framing judgments. Within this division the teachers are engaged in a coöperative effort to list a working minimum of words, terms, definitions, and so on, requisite for effective study in the social sciences. In weekly sessions they review phases of their work in an effort to avoid repetitions and duplications, and to keep their work as well correlated as possible. The immediate task of the instructor is to stimulate the student to investigate the assumptions, principles or laws, and facts involved in the philosophy, machinery, and operations of social control. He confronts the student by lecture, suggestion or discussion, with the problem of finding and using the subject matter suited to stimulating his curiosity, sustaining his intellectual urge, and developing his sense of values in reaching conclusions.

A picture of the general college plan includes what we call the English laboratory. All formal classes in rhetoric have been dropped. Incoming freshmen are given the Coöperative Test Service examination in English usage, along with the tests in other fields, and the lower thirty to fifty per cent are placed in remedial drill sections. Each student in the general college is assigned to a member of the English staff, who serves as his laboratory instructor. Every paper assigned in the general college is prepared under the supervision of one of these instructors. When an assignment is made, the student goes to his instructor, who advises with him on any phase of his problem except the subject matter. He may make suggestions even in that. In the course of preparation of the paper the officer goes over the paper, reads and criticizes it, turns it back for revision, and on until it is marked approved by the instructor. Then it may be submitted to the teacher who assigned it. Hence the student's training in composition goes

through four semesters. He studies the English he needs but does not know. His attention and effort center on his own work. He is not forced to endure the drill of dull students in something he grasped even in high school. He comes to realize that good writing is original, personal, and does not belong solely to work in English. Particular effort is made to encourage originality in both thought and expression.

Something more about our departmental courses might not be amiss. They are essentially what we have always had in the several departments. The aim is the same as it has always been : to make the student an emerging authority or master in the stuff covered. As research refined and particularized knowledge, teachers drew their courses ever within narrower limits and sent their drill-bits deeper into the strata of solid fact. Each poor freshman was treated as if he were being developed as a successor of the professor who sat behind the desk. The conventional categories of departmentalized knowledge were sacredly respected. He was to follow in the illustrious footsteps of the master who poured out facts on the poor student's head and expected him to do something with them. Whatever the student did must be done after the forms and patterns of the master. He was to be a little master.

We have made some changes in our departmental work. Believing the standard departmental course about the best device for undergraduate specialization under mass-production conditions, we have tried to improve it. We have reduced the number of such courses offered, and have tried to admit students to them only when prognostic tests and personal conferences reveal needs, capacity and interests which promise accomplishment of high degree. A student is not supposed to take more than two of these courses in any semester. If he specializes he must keep within limits where he may test his ability to make respectable progress. Encouragement in concentration is provided for the very superior student in what we call "independent study." For the encouragement of originality and self-direction in student effort, teachers are free to substitute other work for part of the recitation periods, either for all of the class or for individual students.

I have tried to state what I understand by meaningful teaching, why we framed our present system for general education, the outline of the frame work of that system, the objectives and procedures adapted, how our teaching staff works, and how the traditional ends of higher education are not only preserved, but even better realized.

The Integrating Course for Upperclassmen versus the Survey Course for Beginners, a College Experiment in the Social Studies

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and
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The college curriculum is being subjected to an exacting scrutiny today both from without and within the institution. On the one hand, a rapidly changing society which is not quite certain of its bearings is demanding that the colleges shall produce a type of student better fitted to meet the needs of the time. From within, the curriculum makers are just as anxious to make such changes as will promote the student's understanding of the society of which he is a part. There is no antagonism between the two objectives.

Among the devices which colleges have employed to facilitate the accomplishment of these purposes are orientation courses, survey courses, and integrating courses. It is the purpose of this article to report an experiment with a general course in the social studies, particularly in regard to the comparative efficacy of such a course as an introductory survey course to underclassmen and as an integrating course to more mature upperclassmen.

During the second semester of 1936-37, Queens-Chicora College gave a course called General Social Science. The members of the class were selected at random from each of the four college classes; freshman, sophomore, junior, and senior. The problem of differentiating instruction to suit varying degrees of maturity and experience was met by presenting to the students mimeographed outlines of the course and of the problems of the course and by providing guide sheets of questions with considerable freedom of choice in the manner in which the student could demonstrate her mastery of the material. The recitation was conducted as a discussion group with a special effort to incorporate all students into the discussion. A prominent factor in this attempt to enlist the members of the class according to their scholastic abilities and maturity was the provision of three types of requirements which the members could choose, these requirements varying in their demands upon maturity. Corresponding to these three types were three credit marks based on both the quality and quantity of work accomplished.

Some attention was given toward keeping the five social studies which were included in the course related in the mind of the student. This was

done (a) by getting answers to a number of questions listed under each social study in the outline, (b) by classifying the different sections of the textbook*, and (c) by classifying all the articles in *Readings in Citizenship*.† During the discussion, however, the students seemed to be but little conscious of whether political science, economics, or some other subject was being considered. Interest was centered on answering the central problem which had been presented. Lectures were of course interpolated as needed for the clarification of the more obscure and difficult phases of the course. Near the close of the semester a questionnaire was given to each student by the dean of instruction, who had no part in teaching the course. The answers to the questions were given by students after careful explanation that their names would not appear on the questionnaire and that no attempt would be made by their instructor to discover the author of any statements which they might make. It is the belief of the writers that the students gave thoughtful consideration to the questions and that their answers provide insight into their ideas about the contribution which the course may have made to their understanding of social science.

The first two items on the questionnaire called for a list of other courses in the social studies which each student had had or was now taking. All juniors and seniors had studied European History and some other social study, such as political science, geography, economics, or sociology. Some had studied several of these courses, and some had studied Ancient History and United States History. The freshmen and sophomores had not studied any social study in college except for the fact that the sophomores were then studying European History. For the purpose of this investigation, therefore, it seemed fair to compare answers of freshmen and sophomores, whom we shall designate as underclassmen, with answers of juniors and seniors, whom we shall designate as upperclassmen. The third item on the questionnaire requested that each student check one of four answers indicating the abstract nature of the course. The four choices were (a) "too abstract for comprehension," (b) "abstract, but can comprehend with hard study," (c) "can comprehend ideas with average study," (d) "easy to comprehend ideas of the course." With one exception the underclassmen checked either (a) or (b), the one exception being a freshman who checked (c). All of the upperclassmen checked either (c) or (d). Because of the remarkable consistency of these answers the conclusion seems justified that the ideas of the course as organized were abstract to the point of difficulty for underclassmen but not too abstract for upperclassmen.

The fourth item called for a check of one of four choices in answer to the question, "To what extent has the course been helpful in understanding society?" The choices were (a) "has been of no help in understanding society," (b) "has been of slight help in understanding society," (c) "has

* Ashley, R. L. *Our Contemporary Civilization.* Henry Holt.

† Jones, J. C., and Vandenbosch, A. *Readings in Citizenship.* Macmillan.

been of definite help in understanding society," (d) "has been of unusual help in understanding society." Choice (b) was checked by seventy per cent of the underclassmen, choice (c) by the other thirty per cent. The upperclassmen varied in their answers, one checking (a). However, seventy-five per cent of the upperclassmen checked choice (c). The contrast seems to be, then, that the underclassmen in general felt that the course had been of slight help in understanding society and that the upperclassmen felt that the course had been of definite help.

Item five called for a check in answer to the question, "On what level do you believe that this course would be most meaningful?" The answers indicate that seventy-five per cent of the class believed that the course should be offered on the upperclass level. Only one student checked the freshman year as the most desirable.

Item six required that the student state in her own words what had been the most helpful feature of the course. Numbers of answers were given which were helpful to the instructor in planning the course for another year, but there was one response which is highly significant for this study. No underclassmen mentioned as the most helpful feature the integrating of the various social sciences, but fifty per cent of the upperclassmen did, of their own volition, indicate this factor as the most helpful feature. It would seem, therefore, that the upperclassmen tended to be more vividly aware of this purpose of the course and to grasp its significance.

Item seven asked the question, "What has been the most difficult feature of the course?" The answers were given in the student's own words. In this case, also, many comments were made which were helpful to the instructor. Of major interest in this article is the fact that fifty per cent of the underclassmen indicated the abstract terminology as the most difficult feature, whereas only one upperclassmen indicated this factor. On the other hand, twenty-five per cent of the upperclassmen felt that the most difficult feature had been the breadth of the ground covered by the course. They felt that the problems of the course "covered too much ground" for a semester course. No underclassman made this comment.

The facts which have been presented are entirely consistent with the subjective judgments of the writers. On the basis of these observations it would seem that the type of course which we have described is more meaningful as an integrating course for students who have had various social sciences than as an introductory survey course for beginning students. It is possible, of course, that the subject might be simplified sufficiently so that freshmen could comprehend its content adequately. This simplification might be attended by the danger of impairing the function of the course as an integrating factor in the development of the student's concept of society. The experiment indicated that the value of the course as an integrating factor was of real worth to the upperclassmen.

Honors Courses for the Degree of Bachelor of Arts*

By Alban G. Widgery
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It is not necessary to discuss the question whether the idea of an "Honors A.B.," meant to be a superior kind of Bachelor's degree, was imported to this country from abroad, and if so whether in the process of its adoption the conception has been misunderstood or misapplied. And it is not the intention here to survey the extent and the manner in which schemes for an Honors A.B. have already been established in a number of American institutions, but to investigate the subject generally and to consider some particular systems.

The movement to establish this type of degree has arisen in part to meet certain kinds of dissatisfaction with and criticisms of the education usual for the ordinary A.B. The purpose of honors schemes cannot be fully appreciated unless these are taken into account. Several kinds of schemes have already been devised and others are possible: one new system is outlined at the end of this paper. The advantages and disadvantages of different types need discussion, but their appropriateness will depend in large measure on the general character and the facilities of the particular institutions for which they are contemplated. But in view of the American restlessness and love of change, it must be emphasized that no honors system worthy of the name can be expected to show in just a few years the results of which it is capable. To test the value of any scheme a considerable period of time is necessary. That makes it important that no scheme should be embarked upon until it is clear that it represents at least some

* This article, as well as the preceding article, is timely as illustrating the increasing interest in curriculum study on the part of institutions of higher learning and members of their faculties in the Southern Association. Professor Widgery, himself familiar both as student and as teacher with the honors courses in British universities, makes three peculiarly interesting suggestions for the consideration of those colleges and universities organizing honors courses:

(1) He classes the honors courses as having much of common purpose with the "pre-professional" courses and "groups of studies" leading to the Bachelor of Arts degree, which have sometimes been questioned as contrary to the spirit of a liberal education, the basis of similiarity being the fact that both the "pre-professional" and "honors" courses represent attempts to meet the needs of individual students;

(2) He deplores the attempt to achieve a "liberal education" by taking so large a part of the student's time in college to give him a smattering of "all the chief branches of human knowledge" in "minimum uniform requirements" that so largely duplicate work the student was required for the same purpose to pursue in the secondary school; and

(3) He denies emphatically that the tutorial *method* is an essential feature of honors work.

What Professor Widgery describes as "elective honors," may well become a happy solution for small colleges as well as for universities dealing with the honors problem.—Editor.

marked advance over the ordinary "pass" degree. The years between seventeen and twenty-one are so important in an individual's education that the very greatest care is demanded in planning schemes of study and training for his adoption. To encourage students to take up a type of program for an honors degree, under the inspiration that thereby they will prove their exceptional ability and get an added qualification, when the program is a hotch-potch leading them nowhere in particular, is criminal.

Whether a student pursues an honors course or not may make a great difference not only to his own future but also in the worth for the community of the work in which he might be engaged later in life. The value of an honors degree is not yet very generally recognized outside the colleges and universities, and all too frequently is not fully appreciated within them. To use an American expression, the idea has to be "sold" to those who employ graduates. Superintendents of education who engage teachers need to be convinced that honors graduates are to be preferred, sometimes even to Masters of Arts. The same may be said with reference to those who recruit men and women for industrial and commercial positions, whether for research or administration. Not until such preference is given to honors graduates will honors systems appear to have justified themselves either to students or to others concerned in their education. But it will not be possible to obtain that preference until good schemes have been planned by the institutions and adopted by students and until there has been an amount of publicity. The initiative must be taken by the university and college authorities, and there is a challenge to professors to discuss the subject of the honors degree. When there are vacancies for positions, the superior claims of honors graduates for appointment should if possible be stressed.

In considering the questions involved in this discussion, distinction must be made between a university with a large faculty and well-equipped for teaching a great diversity of subjects and a college of moderate size catering solely or almost solely to candidates for an A.B. degree. Honors schemes are possible for the latter and should be planned, discussed, and then tested in practice. They will certainly differ in some respects from those appropriate for the former. Serious mistakes might be made in applying in a university a scheme found successful in a comparatively small college.* One suitable in a university may be quite inapplicable in a merely undergraduate college. The suggestions in this paper are more concerned with a university than with a small college. The type of university here considered will usually have special groups of studies and specific training for the A.B. degree for those who wish later to obtain definite vocational qualifications. Students who are able and who wish to take up such pre-medical, pre-legal, pre-ministerial, or social-service programs will not be concerned with the honors degree, which should be available for others not in this or other ways specifi-

* The so-called "group honors," discussed later, may be an example of this type of mistake.

cally provided for. An honors scheme could be, but should not be, formed so as to absorb such programs, which should retain their independence and distinctive roles in university organization. That there may be an amount of overlapping of the different possible or actual arrangements is a matter of no consequence.

Against pre-professional programs an objection is sometimes made which is also urged against some of the ideas concerning the Honors A.B., and it should be dealt with here briefly. It is complained that the students will fail to obtain a satisfactory general cultural background. To the present writer that objection appears to be made most often by persons who themselves have little general culture and who entertain the idea of it as involving a smattering of most subjects to be found in a child's encyclopedia. Further, they are all too frequently devoid of any specialist knowledge or capacity. The term general culture too often means comparative ignorance. In answer to the objection only two remarks need be made at this point.† First, it should be the recognized task of the high schools to train the pupils in the methods of acquisition of knowledge of the kind that is involved in living comprehensively. Secondly, the actual attainment of such knowledge, which is implied by those who talk of general culture, is a life-long affair. Together with such training in methods the high schools should, and to some extent do already, provide instruction in some of the main branches of general import. Those who are primarily concerned with such general culture should concentrate their attention on the high schools. If the high schools do their job effectively, university students adopting pre-professional or Honors A.B. courses will still be continually adding to their general knowledge and efficiency, though not as a task prescribed by university regulations.

For those students who desire the kind of education which these objectors seem predominantly interested in, there will still be retained in the colleges and universities what may be called the more or less traditional ordinary "pass" A.B. degree. Supporters of pre-professional and of honors programs are dissatisfied with and critical of what is involved in preparation for that degree. Their objection is that the student's energies are dissipated over too wide a range of subjects more or less uncoördinated, so that the knowledge he obtains is superficial and soon forgotten and no real efficiency is gained in techniques and methods. A student who has gone through the usual program of courses for the A.B. degree is rarely prepared for graduate study or work in a special field or fields. Educationists coming to America from other countries get the impression that there is too much in the universities resembling what is generally found in high schools. The curricula for the ordinary A.B. degrees and the usual teaching procedure, with its great reliance on "assignments" of reading from textbooks and the frequent

† See further page 319, paragraph beginning, "One objection that has been made. . . ."

"quiz," give good grounds for that impression. The A.M. degree in America is not very highly regarded. This may be because in the time for preparation for that degree the students are not able to acquire a satisfactory knowledge in their fields of study, because when they begin their graduate study their background in their special subjects is so inadequate.

Almost all students who take the ordinary A.B. degree waste considerable time and energy in a number of subjects in which they have little if any interest and in which they rarely attain any worthwhile knowledge or ability. Honors schemes are meant to remedy this situation for as many students as possible. They can succeed in overcoming some of the defects mentioned only if they involve much freedom in the formulation of programs of study. The third type of honors discussed later has especial reference to this requirement. It might reasonably be expected that after satisfactory honors systems have been definitely established in it, a reputable university would have a minimum of fifty per cent of its undergraduate students enrolled for pre-professional and honors courses.

College and university administrators and not a few professors in America who are interested in the establishment of courses for an Honors A.B. degree do not, however, enter fully into the idea and cannot emancipate themselves sufficiently from the traditional scheme of A.B. studies. They are still in bondage to the idea that for all candidates for the A.B. degree there shall be certain "uniform required subjects," and they insist that honors students shall conform to such requirements. They would divide up the time (the credit hours) of work for the degree so that the major portion of it, taken as a whole, is to be devoted to other subjects than the ones included in the specific honors courses. It is simply to trifle with the idea of honors if only a minor part of the total of courses for the degree are specific honors courses. The attitude no doubt is expressive of a survival of that desire for "general culture" which has so vitiated American undergraduate education. A good case might be made for a few "uniform required subjects." But in general "required subjects" should not be uniform for honors students. They should be chiefly "prerequisites" for higher courses as determined by the different departments and so might vary from student to student. If others than these are insisted on, they should be such as may be taken and completed in the freshman year. In any serious honors scheme the student should be able to give at least two-thirds of his credit hours for the degree to the work of his honors program, and it should be more than that if "prerequisites" are counted as part of that program.

It has already been implied that in all honors degree work, whatever the scheme, a higher standard of ability and of efficiency is required than for the ordinary pass degree; and further that the work is to be specialized and not of the kind of general culture already discussed. Honors schemes can be planned along different lines, and a university may have more than

one in operation. If facilities permit, it would be an advantage for a university to have more than one. In what follows three systems are considered: (1) departmental honors; (2) group honors; and (3) elective honors.

The essential idea of departmental honors is that the student shall obtain a Bachelor's degree signifying for that status a sound training in the methods of the subjects of one department and a wide range of knowledge within it, together with any necessary acquaintance with very closely allied subjects in other departments. Students who do creditable work in departmental honors really attain wide and detailed enduring knowledge of their subjects and acquire efficiency in the use of definite techniques and methods. They are well qualified to proceed to graduate or other higher studies in their fields. They are able to cultivate a thorough-going interest in a definite field and are called on to exercise their minds on difficult problems of detail such as are rarely involved in the less intense studies in most other types of program. They thus come to learn what a high standard of knowledge and training really is, and if at some other time in life they are called to embark on studies in some other fields they are likely to enter upon such tasks aiming at similar standards. As giving intellectual training and a genuine initiation to knowledge no other honors scheme can successfully compete with this. But considering the general level of attainment of most students coming to the universities, *at the present time* comparatively few are ready for the type of work involved. At this stage, however, it is not advocated for large numbers. There ought not to be misunderstanding as to who should be encouraged to take departmental honors. It seems to be sometimes supposed that it is meant solely for those who intend to go on to advanced degrees and to enter the higher branches of the teaching profession as specialists. That it is very desirable for such persons is evident, but it is distinctly not meant for those alone. Some departmental honors may be of inestimable value for persons intending to go into certain kinds of industrial research or other types of investigation or administration. But, again, it is not simply these two classes of students who are concerned. Advocates of departmental honors maintain that quite irrespective of what the student's future career may be, such honors work provides the best available kind of intellectual training and discipline. Why the best? Because it alone is capable of giving the student a real sense of mastery and an appreciation of what efficiency means and involves.‡ It should be clear that departmental honors can be effectively organized only in those departments in which there are several teachers of high standing and sufficient courses to cover not only the main lines but much of the detail of their subjects.

‡ From the previous references to them, it may be understood that the present writer would suppose that "pre-professional" programs could be regarded as a type of departmental honors for inclusion in the implication of this sentence.

One objection that has been made to this scheme must be considered, that the range of studies is too narrow. But an important distinction is involved here: though to one who has not himself taken such a degree the curriculum may appear narrow, the training actually is not narrowing. In fact, on the contrary, in many years occupied largely with teaching for departmental honors the present writer has found its effect to be the opposite, and for this reason, that it is in and through such work that the individual has developed a genuine enthusiasm for knowledge, with the result that he has usually been inclined to pursue intellectual interests not only in other fields related to his subject but also beyond. It is true that some specialist professors and other researchers do become narrow, but that is most often because of conditions of their work or because temperamental characteristics restrict them. Narrowness is not necessarily involved in being trained as specialists, for there are sufficient instances of specialists who are also men of wide interests and knowledge to prove the contrary.

Some of those who urge the objection discussed in the previous paragraph nevertheless are convinced that something different from the ordinary A.B. degree program is required. That is recognised as being too varied so that the energies of the student are dissipated and the standard of attainment in any subject is low and the knowledge obtained superficial. They suggest a type of group honors, restricted in scope as compared with the ordinary degree, yet wider than departmental honors in involving definitely prescribed work in about three departments. There is much to be said for such group honors, especially where, as in even some of the best undergraduate colleges, there is an insufficient variety of work or not enough teachers of high standing in individual departments to provide for departmental honors. In group honors the work in one department may predominate, but not overwhelmingly so. The work in the other departments is meant to be related in its content and to some extent in its methods to those of the predominant department. Thus considered the scheme is a compromise between the "pass" degree and departmental honors. It may appeal to some good students as demanding a higher standard of work in a smaller number of subjects than is required for the "pass" degree. But it has defects common to compromises. Actually, with the courses available, it is rarely possible to get a satisfactory coördination of subjects from different departments. With the restriction of the total number of hours for honors work, owing to the insistence upon non-honors "uniform required subjects," only a very limited number of courses can be taken in any of the departments involved in group honors. If the chosen courses are very closely related the result might be actually if not apparently more narrow than departmental honors; and then a main purpose of the scheme would not be realised. If they are not very closely related, there is likely to be a character of disconnectedness in much of what is studied, and if the student

should concentrate his attention chiefly on what is definitely related the result would again be narrow, even more narrow. From what was said in the previous paragraph it should be clear that the writer is not inclined to attach very much importance to charges of narrowness; but the point here is that advocates of group honors who make that charge seriously against departmental honors must face the possibility of a similar objection to their scheme.

The main objection to group honors, however, is that the amount of concentration or study in any one field does not give adequate knowledge within it or a sense of mastery of its technique. To modify an English expression, the result is "neither beef nor fowl, nor good red herring." A student who takes several courses in English literature, two in Fine Arts (concerned, for example, with the history and appreciation of certain periods of painting and sculpture in particular countries or continents), and two in Philosophy (limited possibly to some ancient philosophy and to aesthetics), cannot rightly be regarded as likely to obtain an efficient training or a wide detailed knowledge in any one of these fields. He could not reasonably be described as "an honors student" in English Literature, or in Fine Arts, or in Philosophy, for his knowledge in any one can hardly be anything but "scrappy" and his training elementary. Since his type of work is not really honors in any one of these departments, it may be regarded as something of a misnomer to call his work honors in the three departments when taken together. The scheme is really a form of restricted major and minors, with the demand for a higher standard of achievement than usual in the ordinary "pass" degree.

Some advocates of such group honors will undoubtedly reflect that so far there has been no mention of what to them is a very important part of the scheme: the special tutorial supervision of the students taking such honors work. So before outlining a third possibility for an honors degree, the proposals for instruction and training must be considered. This is a matter to which administrators and heads of departments in colleges and universities should give careful attention. It is important that they should face the issues involved and come to some well-considered policy. For it is of the utmost significance in a college or university as to how the available funds are spent. Administrators ought not to be misled as to the financial requirements for establishing an effective system of the Honors A.B. degree. The suggestion is made, generally by those who advocate group honors—and it is that "important part of the scheme" referred to above—that provision should (must?) be made for the special tutorial supervision of honors students in small groups. For such tutorial supervision to be conducted on an effective scale either there must be a large addition to the normal faculty or the time and energies of a normal faculty must be diverted in no inconsiderable measure to work with a comparatively small part of the stu-

dent body. Most heads of departments already find it difficult (indeed, rarely possible) to have all the different branches of their subjects adequately represented and may well object to the diversion of some of their faculty in the manner involved. Advocates of these tutorial classes appear to imply that the lecture courses from which in part the students must be withdrawn for the sake of these classes are not what they should be for good students. That is a serious reflection which may contain some truth: the remedy is to take steps that lecture courses shall be what they ought to be. On whatever scheme, the student may be supposed to be admitted as a candidate for an honors degree only after having shown more than usual capacity in the elementary courses that he would take in his early time in the university. As an honors student he should be mainly in advanced classes. These are usually not large, and many of them are and most of them could be, not simple lecture courses, but discussion and coöperative groups given such formal lectures as may be deemed necessary. An honors student should get as much from such classes and might get more than from the tutorial classes proposed, and that for the reason involved in the final objection to the tutorial plan. This is that the tutorial groups are not infrequently committed to younger members of the faculty, not a few of whom have still to show that they have the capacity and the knowledge in their subjects equal to those who conduct the advanced classes referred to. If occasionally tutorial groups are in charge of teachers of high standing and widely recognized scholarship, that is an exception, and the question may be raised whether even they might not be more profitably engaged in some other manner. It may seriously be asked if it is fair to students to encourage them to take an honors course, as something special, and then to divert their attention to some of the less qualified members of the faculty. Departmental honors, and the scheme now to be presented, both require some special supervision of students, but it can be limited to weekly or fortnightly consultations and guidance in reading, each qualified member of the faculty taking a small share in the work.

The need of economy of organization in colleges and universities has led to a limitation of the ways in which students may acquire a particular degree, especially the A.B. Yet one necessary direction of improvement of higher education is the provision of a greater possibility of diversity with a wider range of freedom of choice, admitting of various types of program corresponding more closely with the individual student's interests, abilities, and needs. The establishment of honors courses such as those already described is a step in this direction. There is another scheme which, taking up something of the principle of the adversely criticized group honors, avoids its defect of involving groups of students all in the same prescribed courses, and achieves the desired aim of greater diversity and freedom of choice. For this type of Honors A.B. some suitable name is required: in

this paper it is called "elective honors" for the reason that the programs of studies are mainly elected by the individual students.

To be admitted to elective honors the student must during his freshman year have done work, which in the opinion of a person assigned to judge, is above the average or shows marked ability in certain definite directions. At the end of the freshman year, or at the beginning of the sophomore year, he should be admitted provisionally as an elective honors student. He should then be permitted *to draw up for himself*, in consultation if he wishes with one or more members of the faculty, a general sketch of the program of work he wants to pursue through his remaining three years, this to include a dominant concentration in one department, but supplemented by courses, up to a prescribed maximum number, from other departments. During the sophomore year he should be required to attend the more elementary courses in his program, including any "prerequisites" for higher courses he has listed. If his record at the end of that year is sufficiently high, he should be definitely enrolled as a candidate for elective honors. He must then present his proposed program to the department of his field of concentration to be scrutinized by an assigned member of that department, who—if necessary—will call for explanations and modifications. If at the end of the junior year the student wishes to modify his proposed program for the senior year, he should be allowed to do so with the consent of the same instructor. During his junior and senior years the student should be required to prepare an essay or a report on special work in the field of concentration. The nature of this should be decided by the student in consultation with the instructor, to whom he should go periodically for supervision and guidance. If two-thirds or more of the required credits of the junior and senior years taken together are of grade A, the student should be awarded a First Class Honors A.B. degree; if two-thirds or over are of grade B he should be awarded a Second Class Honors.§

In judging this, as in evaluating any other honors scheme, it must be borne in mind that it is meant to be only for approved students. It does not involve special provision for tutorial groups, because elective honors students would not be likely to fall into groups. The scheme is to supplement, not to replace, departmental honors. It would, however, render the form of group honors discussed unnecessary. The great advantage of the elective honors system is that it admits of a diversity of programs. For particular students it may be better than departmental honors because it may include a coördinated group of studies from several departments. It would do what as yet no scheme has done: permit of flexibility with reference to the individual's interests, abilities, and needs. The proposal is that of the present writer, after many years of experience of teaching honors

§ A student who does not, in any system, reach the standard required for an Honors degree should be awarded an ordinary degree if his attainments for that are adequate.

students, and much thought recently given to the subject in view of the development of honors work at the university in which he is now teaching. Such a scheme may not yet be in operation anywhere; but that cannot be regarded as a serious objection to it: even an Englishman may admit that some novelties are good. The practical difficulties that may appear in organizing the scheme proposed could be overcome if it is introduced gradually, that is, at first for few and then for more students as the essential idea came to be better understood. It should be welcomed by students as an advance towards the greater freedom that is needed in American education and away from sterotyped "Fordism," which though beneficial in mechanical industry is too often an evil in the cultural life of mankind. It is possible that for many years American colleges and universities must do work that could be done in the high schools and that some fifty per cent of their undergraduates should continue to take work of the traditional kind leading to the ordinary A.B. degree. But it may well be claimed that one of the many possible lines of improvement will be satisfactory provision for the other fifty per cent to take pre-professional and honors courses.

Inspection versus Interpretation*

By Charles C. McCracken
General Director, Department of Colleges, Board of Christian Education, Presbyterian Church in the U. S. A.

Accrediting agencies have been an annoyance to college and university officials even though they are recognized as essential in guaranteeing institutions that will offer to youth an education of the type announced and will maintain organizations that will give assurance of achievement. These agencies are associations comprising various groups of institutions which define their own standards and outline procedures for enforcing the same on their own members. It is easy for a particular college to forget that it is a party to the standards set and that it has as much right as any other member to urge reform in the procedures used.

Unfortunately, accrediting agencies have had to resort to inspection in order to determine whether an institution is maintaining the quality of work necessary for proper recognition by other colleges or universities. Inspection is mechanical and easy to administer. It is a checking process which requires little preparation. It allows for little or no initiative on the part of the inspector. Fortunately, many inspectors have been willing to make helpful suggestions as to how similar problems are being met elsewhere, but, *as inspectors*, they are under no obligation to give advice or help. If we employ inspectors who are capable and willing to advise college officials and faculties in regard to their problems, much of the discontent with and criticism of the accrediting agencies can be avoided, and much good can be done. No institution of higher education is beyond criticism, either destructive or constructive.

Minimum standards set by such associations have involved amount of endowment, preparation and compensation of faculty, library and laboratory facilities, teaching load, class size, and various other items. As such accreditation procedures have been made more effective, the minimum standards have been raised and have become more and more nearly uniform in the various associations. The difficulty in meeting these standards and the tendency toward uniformity have brought about discontent and dissatisfaction on the part of many institutions.

In 1928, the North Central Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools recognized the undesirability of their "standards" for accreditation and appointed a commission to make a study of accrediting procedures. This

* Director McCracken's article is of special interest because of the attempt of the Southern Association and similar associations to develop qualitative standards for the assistance of member institutions. He describes the method by which he, as a part of his work in assisting Presbyterian colleges who are members of the North Central Association, has undertaken to interpret the new standards being evolved in that Association. His article brings out with special force the fact that qualitative standards, once they have been evolved, will need sympathetic and careful interpretation if they are to serve their purpose.—Editor.

commission abandoned the term "standards" due to the connotations which accompanied the term and used instead "Bases of Accrediting." The Statement of Policy, Section III, reads:

> An institution will be judged for accreditment upon the basis of the total pattern it presents as an institution of higher education. While institutions will be judged in terms of each of the characteristics noted in this statement of policy, it is recognized that wide variations will appear in the degree of conformity realized. It is accepted as a principle of procedure that superiority in some characteristic may be regarded as compensating, to some extent, for deficiencies in other respects. The facilities and activities of an institution will be judged in terms of the purposes it seeks to serve.*

In view of the announced intention of the North Central to judge a college on the extent to which it has accomplished its purpose or objectives, the scheme gained the attention and interest of colleges and universities everywhere. A pattern map was designed which seemed to enable a college immediately to know its strong and its weak points. With such specific information at hand, the college presumably would be able to proceed to some solution of its problems. The old arbitrary standards were to be discarded and freedom from these formalized restrictions gave a feeling of exhilaration to many college presidents.

The pattern map provided for a distribution of the colleges in the North Central on percentile rankings in eighty-one schedules, grouped as follows: Faculty, 25 schedules; Curriculum, 4; Instruction, 5; Library, 6; Induction of Students, 2; Student Personnel, 9; Administration, 13; Finance, 4; Plant, 2; Institutional Study, 5; Athletics, 6. In order to establish norms upon which to determine the position of a college in each of the schedules, 57 institutions were chosen to participate in the initial study. Out of the data from these colleges and universities, norms were developed.

In assuming my duties as Director of the College Department of the Board of Christian Education of the Presbyterian Church, U. S. A., I was impressed with the importance of the pattern map and of the objective of the North Central Association in working for improvement of member institutions instead of resorting to inquisitorial methods of inspection to see whether an institution fully met the old arbitrary standards set by the Association. It was with no little surprise, however, that I learned that the pattern map was not being used by the colleges and furthermore that it was not being used because it was not understood. It made either a nice picture to be displayed on the wall or it helped to fill an already crowded file of communications from the North Central. Evidently something was wrong, and the difficulty appeared to be in the matter of interpretation. The data were correct and were carefully treated statistically. The colleges were interested in seeing their percentile rankings as the pattern grew from time to time due to

* Zook, G. F. and Haggerty, M. E., *Principles of Accrediting Higher Institutions*, University of Chicago Press, 1936.

studies involving additional schedules. To date, the pattern map has been completed for finances, library, and faculty only. But since the institutions did not have access to the norms and were unacquainted with the statistical procedures involved, it was impossible for them fully to understand the pattern map and, therefore, to use it intelligently.

The greatest difficulty appeared to lie in the fact that in the distribution of institutions on the percentile base, both public and private, and large and small, were included. This meant that the private college had no basis for making comparisons with other private colleges. The same was true among the public institutions. The college with 100 students found itself at a loss when comparing itself with others in a group, some of which had 15,000 students. To compare the library facilities of a small private arts college with those of the great state universities introduced an element that defeated the purpose of the whole procedure.

With these difficulties in mind and with a definite conviction that the North Central purpose and procedure were intrinsically sound, I undertook to discover a procedure of interpretation that would reveal to the twenty-two Presbyterian Colleges in the North Central Association the real value of the North Central contribution and the genuine service which the Association was rendering to them. Naturally, misunderstandings had grown up between the colleges and the Association and these had to be eliminated, but this could not be done without a fuller grasp of details.

As a first step, I requested the Secretary of the Commission on Institutions of Higher Education of the North Central Association to send me copies of the official reports received by the Commission from the Presbyterian colleges. This he consented to do provided each college gave written consent for transmitting these confidential reports to me.

Upon receipt of these reports, it was evident that the norms upon which the pattern map was built must also be available. The Secretary very kindly gave me access to these and to other valuable information necessary to correct interpretation. With the official reports from which the data were derived and with the norms available, it became possible to construct a graph that would give true comparisons within our group of twenty-two liberal arts colleges which are homogeneous in that they have similar purposes, similar curricula, similar students and faculties and are similar in size.

At the same time, it was desirable to keep the comparison between these colleges as a group and the two hundred twenty-eight colleges in the North Central membership. To this end, a device was evolved to give a comparison between any one of our colleges and all of our colleges in this area. In addition, it would give a comparison between either any one or the entire group of these colleges and all of the colleges of the North Central Association.

To effect this purpose, a series of nine charts was constructed to show the following in these twenty-two colleges: faculty salaries; faculty salaries

showing maximum instructional, median administrative, and median instructional salaries; teaching load; average number of months of graduate study per staff member; percentage of doctor's degrees; institutional aids to faculty growth; membership, meetings attended, and appearance on programs of learned societies; articles published; books and monographs published. In each of the last three, the data covered the five years, 1931-1936.

For purpose of illustration, the chart showing the average number of months of graduate study per staff member is reproduced (p. 328). In this chart, the letters at the bottom indicate the respective colleges, each of which has a key letter known only to the college concerned. At the left hand is the number of months. The solid lines across the page indicates the average number of months of graduate study per staff member for each college. The dotted lines indicate the 25th, 50th, 75th, and 99th percentiles for the North Central Association members.

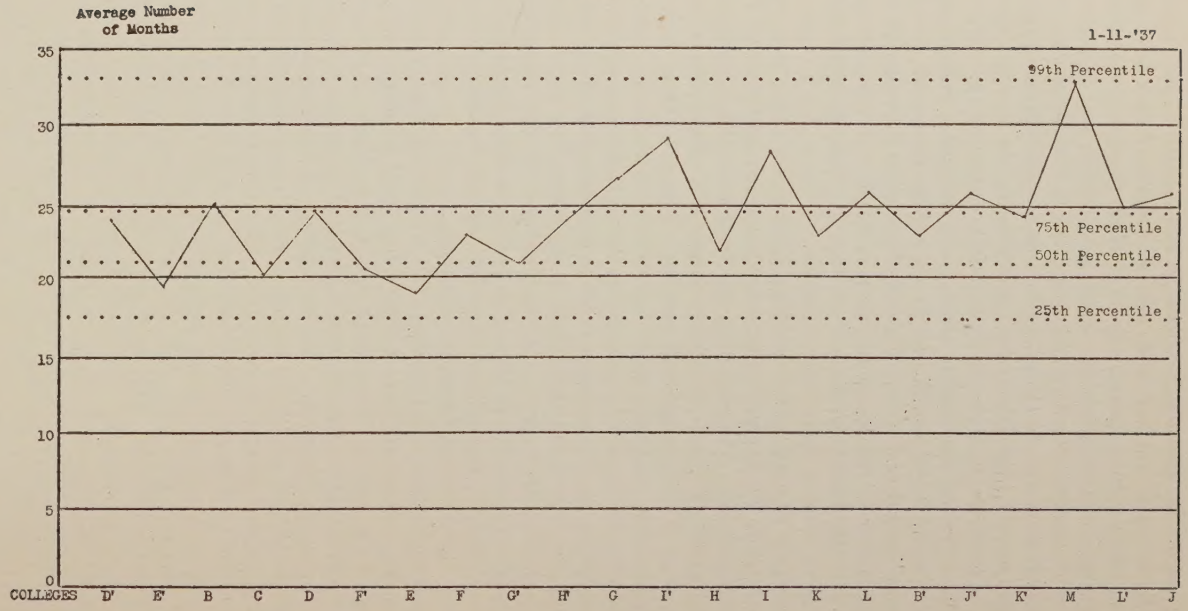
Several facts at once become evident. There is a range from 18.79 to 33.25 months in the average of graduate study per staff member in these twenty-two colleges. The median for the North Central is *twenty-one* months. One of this group stands at the 99th percentile of the North Central with an average of 33.25 months per staff member. This is a college with several hundred students. Eighteen of the twenty-two are above the 50th percentile of the North Central in graduate preparation and none is below the 32nd percentile, with an average of 18.79 months per staff member. Incidentally, the importance of accuracy in making reports to the Association becomes immediately evident. All the charts were so constructed that any college whether in the North Central or outside could project itself into the graphs and thus see where it would be if it were in the North Central and judged by North Central bases for accrediting.

My position is that of a counselor who gives any assistance possible by advising with colleges concerning their educational problems and possible solutions of the same. These charts and other graphic presentations of conditions within the colleges become the basis of discussions within faculties and within boards of trustees. Whenever possible, I join in these discussions. Since the identity of a college is known only to its own staff, the discussions are strictly impersonal and are conducted with a view to finding the strength or weakness of a college and then to studying means to make a better college.

In order to extend my service, arrangements like that with the North Central have now been made with the Middle States Association and with the Southern Association. It is my thought that we should all be interested in making better colleges. The North Central plan is one of real merit and without this basic work, my work would have been impossible without a greater outlay of time and money than would have been justified. As it is, my part has been to take the contribution which the North Central has made and make it vital and real to our colleges through interpretation and counsel.

CHART 4 - GRADUATE STUDY PER STAFF MEMBER

1935 - 36



*Specimen of Director McCracken's nine charts